

with disabilities, the elderly, non-English speakers, children, the poor, and the homeless. We understand that there is often significant overlap between at-risk groups. Individuals who are homeless, for example, are also poor and often disabled.

Senators COCHRAN, OBAMA, KOHL, and LANDRIEU and I also believe that a new director of At-Risk Individuals will also be a great resource to States, which will now have to incorporate the needs of at-risk individuals into disaster plans as a condition of receiving Federal disaster preparedness funding. The process by which the needs of at-risk individuals are incorporated into State, let alone Federal disaster plans is not obvious and will require both accumulation and dissemination of expertise. The committee envisions the Office of At-Risk Individuals as an ideal repository and resource for information in this regard. This information can be gathered from entities already doing excellent work in the field. Within HHS, this includes the Administration on Aging, the Office on Disability, and Administration on Developmental Disabilities. Within DHS, this includes the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the Preparedness Directorate, and the Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities. Within the community, this includes organizations like C.A.R.D. in California and the Kellogg Foundation's Redefining Readiness Projects. Within Academia, this includes work done by the Center for Civilian Bio-defense Studies in Maryland and the New York Academy of Medicine. Nationally, this includes the National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness, Initiative, the Center for Disability and Special Needs Preparedness, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Finally, Senators COCHRAN, OBAMA, KOHL, and LANDRIEU and I believe that a new Director of At-Risk Individuals can be an important source of funding and support for a community engagement process focused on organizing ordinary citizens to prepare and to respond to public health emergencies. The public is not a passive entity and must be viewed as a valuable partner in disaster planning and response. Communities are better able, for example, to identify the location of their special needs populations, to communicate with them, and to intervene in ways that are consistent with the reality of people's lives. In addition, during disasters, the governmental response is often delayed, and people must be able to protect themselves why they wait for help. Last of all, community-derived public health emergency plans must be coordinated with local, State and Federal disaster plans and the new Office of At-Risk Individuals can fund opportunities to bring all key stakeholders together.

The AARP, the American Red Cross, United Cerebral Palsy, and the Amer-

ican Academy of Pediatrics have all endorsed this important amendment. These are groups that most would agree know much about at-risk individuals, disaster preparedness and response.

In short, the process of addressing the needs of at-risk individuals during public health emergencies is a necessary and immense task that must be overseen. A new Director of At-Risk Individuals with a budget of up to \$5 million as specified in S. 3678 will provide the focus, expertise, personnel, and institutional memory to assure that the at-risk language in S. 3678 is followed and that the Government, in planning for and responding to emergencies, keeps the needs of all Americans, front and center.

I thank Senators BURR and KENNEDY again for writing and passing S. 3678 and being open to the Lieberman-Cochran language.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR STEPHEN G. PURDY

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise to recognize Major Stephen G. Purdy, Jr., of the U.S. Air Force for the outstanding contributions he rendered this year while serving as a legislative fellow on my staff. Stephen will soon complete his Capitol Hill fellowship, and it is my hope that he has benefited as much from this experience as I have benefited from having him on my staff.

In the course of Stephen's military career, he has served rotations in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Matters and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisitions, Space and Nuclear Programs. While working at the Space and Missile Systems Center, Stephen was the Atlas V Program chief engineer. Additionally, Stephen has served as the Joint Counterair Acquisition Manager at the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisitions, Global Power Directorate. Finally, before joining my office Stephen was posted to the Secretary of the Air Force Office of Legislative Liaison.

To my great benefit, Stephen joined my office in a year when the Air Force was searching for a new mission for Cannon Air Force base in New Mexico. Cannon was originally targeted for closure on the Department of Defense's, DOD, Base Closure and Realignment, BRAC, list. However, the BRAC Commission ultimately found that the DOD "substantially deviated" on several BRAC selection criteria and required that DOD shall seek a new mission for Cannon. Stephen's experience proved critical in our successful efforts to secure a new mission for Cannon. I have no doubt that his tireless work and dedication were important to the Air Force's decision to relocate the Air Force Special Operation Command's 16th Special Operations Wing to Cannon, which has ensured that Cannon will continue to play an important role in securing our Nation.

I must also thank Stephen's family for enduring his many late nights at work. So to Wendy, Stephen's wife, and the Purdy children, Taylor and Holly, I say thank you. And without question, you can be extremely proud of Stephen's dedication to our country.

Finally, Mr. President, I give my heartfelt thanks to Stephen for his service. His can-do attitude and tireless work ethic were infectious. His willingness to tackle issues which were new to him and to embrace the goals I've set for my staff on behalf of both the men and women of the Armed Forces and the citizens of New Mexico were truly commendable. I have no doubt that as Stephen continues his military career he will achieve great things for both the U.S. Air Force and his country, and I wish him the very best of luck in all his future endeavors.

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATION 2006

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate briefly turned to H.R. 5384, the Agriculture Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2007. This bill appropriates about \$98 billion in spending, an amount that is approximately \$4.9 billion over the administration's budget request, and \$4.7 billion more than the House-passed bill. Although we were unable to complete work on H.R. 5384, I want to explain my objections to the passage of this bill in its current form.

I believe that some Federal involvement is necessary to assist low-income families under the food stamp program, and that we should ensure that our farmers stay out of the red, and to this end, many of the programs under the Agriculture Department are worthwhile and I support their funding. I know that many of my colleagues have spoken before the Senate about the economic struggles of America's farmers. But as Congress looks ahead toward legislating a new farm bill in the near future, next year in fact, we once again conform to the practice of diverting taxpayer dollars into an array of special interest pork projects which have not been authorized or requested by the Administration.

Let's take a look at some of the earmarks that are in this bill and accompanying report:

\$3.5 million for fruit fly control in Texas, which was not in the administration's budget request.

\$400,000 for codling moth research in Kerneysville, WVA, which was not in the administration's budget request.

\$200,000 for research into the genetic enhancement of barley in Aberdeen, ID, which was not in the administration's budget request.

\$300,000 for grass research in Burns, OR which was not in the administration's budget request.

\$750,000 to the Denali Commission to improve solid waste disposal sites in Alaska, which was not in the administration's budget request.

\$200,000 for the Utah State University's Space Dynamics Laboratory to